

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, BG

SUBJECT: THE ONLY SHOW IN TOWN: PREPARATIONS FOR MARCH 26

1. SUMMARY: THE BDG AND BAKSAL ARE PULLING OUT ALL THE STOPS TO MAKE INDEPENDENCE DAY, MARCH 26, THE BIGGEST CELEBRATION IN BANGLADESH SINCE 1972. FOR WEEKS, BAKSAL LEADERS AND CABINET MINISTERS HAVE BEEN HOLDING MEETINGS WITH POLITICAL, LABOR, STUDENT, YOUTH, AND EDUCATIONAL GROUPS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY BUT LCRINCIPALLY IN THE DACCA AREA. AT EACH MEETING, THE MESSAGE IS THE SAME: FATHER OF THE NATION, PRESIDENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH, AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BANGLADESH KRISHAK SHRAMIK AWAMI LEAGUE, BANGABHANDU SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN WILL GIVE AN HISTORIC SPEECH EXPLAINING THE PROGRAM OF THE SECOND REVOLUTION; IT IS THE DUTY OF ALL CITIZENS TO MAKE THE SECOND REVOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION A SUCCESS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE BURDEN OF WHIPPING UP ENTHUSIASM AND TURNING OUT THE CROWDS FOR THE MEETING AT THE SUHRAWARDY UDYAN HAS FALLEN TO MUJIB'S POLITICAL OPERATIVES AND ORGANIZERS FROM THE OLD AWAMI LEAGUE, PROMINENTLY SHEIKH

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MONI, ABDUR RAZZAK, ZILLUR RAHMAN, GAZI GOLAM MUSTAFA,

KORBAN ALI, SHEIKH SYEDUL ISLAM, AND MOIHUDDING AHMED. ALSO IN THE ACT ARE A SPRINKLING OF NAP/MUZAFFAR AND CPB SPEAKERS. THE PREPARATIONS ARE CULMINATING ON MARCH 24 AND 25 IN A SERIES OF NEIGHBORHOOD TORCHLIGHT PROCESSIONS.

3. TO GET THE PEOPLE TO DACCA, THE BDG HAS ANNOUNCED SPECIAL SCHEDULES FOR TRUCKS, TRAINS, BUSES, LAUNCHES, STEAMERS AND, ACCORDING TO ONE REPORT, SEA TRUCKS NORMALLY USED IN RELIEF WORK. POSTERS ARE UP ALL OVER DACCA AND TRUCKS AND RICKSHAWS PLY THE ROADS WITH LOUD-SPEAKERS ANNOUNCING THE MEETING. THE RICKSHAW PULLERS IN DACCA HAVE AGREED TO CARRY PASSENGERS FREE TO THE UDYAN AND THE TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION HAS ANNOUNCED THAT ITS DRIVERS AND HELPERS WILL WORK FREE TOMORROW. NEWSPAPER REPORTS FROM VARIOUS DISTRICTS SAY THAT HUNDREDS AND THOUSANDS UNDER BAKSAL AND LABOR UNION AUSPICES ARE ENROUTE TO DACCA. WE UNDERSTAND THAT VARIOUS DISTRICT POLITICAL AND UNION LEADERS HAVE ATTENDANCE QUOTAS TO FILL. OSTENSIBLY TO PERMIT ITS EMPLOYEES TO ATTEND THE MEETING, THE FILM DISTRIBUTORS ORGANIZATION HAS ANNOUNCED THAT ALL THEATRES IN DACCA WILL BE CLOSED MARCH 26, IN EFFECT ENSURING THAT THE MEETING AT THE SUHRAWARDY WILL BE THE ONLY SHOW IN TOWN.

4. AT THE SUHRAWARDY UDYAN, A TWENTY-FOOT HIGH SPEAKERS' PLATFORM IS BEING BUILT, SUPPOSEDLY THE WORK OF THE DACCA CITY BRANCH OF BAKSAL BUT DESIGNED BY THE GOVERNMENT'S CHIEF ARCHITECT. ACCORDING TO BAKSAL PRESS RELEASE, THE DESIGN OF THE "GRAND EDIFICE" WILL HAVE SAYINGS OF THE FATHER OF THE NATION INSCRIBED AROUND THE BASE AND ABOVE THAT AN EIGHT-FOOT REPLICA OF THE "RISING SUN CASTING A CRIMSON GLOW ALL AROUND IT... DECKED WITH THE PORTRAIT OF A WHITE PIGEON SYMOBLIZING BANGLADESH'S UNQUALIFIED COMMITMENT TO PEACE." ATOP THE SUN WILL BE A FOUR-FOOT SHAPLA (WATER LILY) "AS WHITE AS MONUMENTAL ALABASTER SYMBOLIZING BEAUTY AND TRUTH." ALTOGETHER THE STRUCTURE WILL REPRESENT THE "NATIONAL ETHOS (AND) EPITOMIZE THE LONG-CHERISHED DREAMS OF THE FATHER OF THE NATION TO ESTABLISH HAPPY, PROSPEROUS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROGRESSIVE, PEACEFUL SONOR BANGLA ON THE SOVEREIGN SOIL OF BANGLADESH."

5. IN HONOR OF INDEPENDENCE DAY, WHICH COINCIDENTALLY IS ALSO THE PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY THIS YEAR, BANGLADESH RADIO IS PLANNING A 100-HOUR PROGRAM BEGINNING IN THE MORNING ON THE 26TH. NEWSPAPERS, ORDINARILY CLOSED ON A HOLIDAY AND THUS NOT PUBLISHING THE NEXT DAY, WILL

REMAIN OPEN IN ORDER TO PROVIDE FULL AND TIMELY
COVERAGE OF THE EVENT. THE HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL, NOW
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF GAZI GOLAM MUSTAFA'S BANGLADESH
RED CROSS, IS PLANNING TO SET UP A "FULL FLEDGED HOSPITAL"
AT THE SUHRAWARDY, MANNED BY 200 VOLUNTEER DOCTORS AND
OTHER MEDICAL PERSONNEL; PRESUMABLY THE HOSPITAL IS FOR
FIRST AID FOR THE LIKELY VICTIMS OF HEAT PROSTRATION
FROM THE 95 DEGREE SWELTERING CLIMATE PREVAILING IN
DACCA THIS WEEK. (HEADS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS HAVE BEEN "INVITED"
AND MAY BE AMONG THE VICTIMS). SEPARATE CELEBRATIONS IN CHITTAGONG
CALL FOR HERALDING THE 26TH AT MIDNIGHT WITH
"WHISTLING BY THE RAILWAY ENGINES AND SHIPS BERTHED AT
THE PORT AND WITH THE BURSTING OF FIRECRACKERS" BY THE
ARMY, NAVY, POLICE, ANSAR, AND FIRE BRIGADE.

6. AMID ALL THE FANFARE, UNDERGROUND OPPOSITION
ELEMENTS HAVE ADDED OCCASIONAL COUNTERPOINT. MARCH 17
A FEW MOLOTOV COCKTAILS WERE THROWN AT THE OFFICES OF
ITTEFAQ, THE CENTRAL TELEGRAPH, AND A MARKET AREA. WE
HAVE HEARD THAT TWO BOMB BLASTS OCCURED MARCH 24, ONE
IN OLD DACCA, THE OTHER NEAR DACCA UNIVERSITY, BUT
THESE WERE UNREPORTED IN THE PRESS. POLICE HAVE MADE
NO KNOWN ARRESTS IN THE INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL BOMBING
OF MARCH 16; ACCORDING TO ONE REPORT, GOVERNMENT BOMB
EXPERTS CONSIDER THAT BLAST TO HAVE BEEN THE RESULT
OF A MODERN AND RELATIVELY POWERFUL TIME BOMB PLACED
IN AN ATTACHE CASE SHOVED UNDER A SOFA IN THE BAR.
SOME UNDERGROUND PAMPHLETS AND NEWSPAPERS HAVE BEEN
CIRCULATED, BUT POLICE HAVE ARRESTED THE YOUTHFUL
DISTRIBUTORS. ASIDE FROM YOUTHS OBSERVED TEARING
DOWN POSTERS FOR THE MEETING, THERE HAS BEEN NO
OTHER ACTIVE OPPOSITION. TRUCK LOADS OF RAKKHI BAHINI
THIS WEEK HAVE BEEN SEEN PATROLLING THE STREETS OF
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DACCA READY, PRESUMABLY, TO PUT DOWN WHATEVER ATTEMPTS
AT PROTEST OR DISRUPTION MIGHT BE MADE.
CHESLAW

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